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SUBJECT: TRAVEL OF NEA ADVANCE TEAM FOR WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM - REQUEST FOR COUNTRY CLEARANCE

REF: SECSTATE 152361

1. Embassy Amman grants country clearance to State/NEA personnel Gary Grappo, Amy Schedlbauer, Jessica Davies and Sonia Franceski to Amman, Jordan from o/a June 10 to o/a June 25, 2003. Purpose of the trip is to assist in coordinating and preparing for USG participation in the World Economic Forum Extraordinary Annual Meeting at the Dead Sea. We welcome the opportunity to support and take action on planning and coordination with Grappo and the Jordanians and propose that Embassy Control Officer Tom Goldberger be assigned full time to collaborate and coordinate with Grappo and team. Contact numbers for Mr. Goldberger are as follows: office: 011-962-6-592-0101, ext. 2556; fax: 011-962-6-592-7653; home: 011-962-6-585-9657, mobile: 011-962-79-560-8995. The Embassy's after-hours telephone number is: 011-962-6-592-0120.

2. The Embassy has begun holding internal meetings to prepare for WEF-related logistical requirements and to assign control officers. We expect that Grappo and advance team members will join these countdown meetings beginning June 12. We have also requested a meeting for Grappo with Planning Minister Awadallah (the Jordanian WEF Coordinator) on June 12. We understand that WEF officials will not begin work in Amman until June 15. Control officer Goldberger will be available for all meetings between the NEA advance team and Jordanian and WEF officials.

3. As requested in reftel, post has been in contact with WEF North America coordinator Corine Blesi in Geneva about hotel rooms, transportation, and credentialing requirements for the U.S. delegations. We have also described to her the basic requirements of the two Congressional delegations that are expected to coincide with the delegation led by the Secretary. With the NEA advance team's involvement and

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assistance, we will work with the WEF and the Jordanians on the coordinated needs of the official U.S. delegation and CODELS for transportation, hotel room, security, and other official USG requirements, such as arrangements for press events and bilateral meetings with Jordanian officials and other WEF participants.

4. Valid visas are required for entry into Jordan. Visas may be obtained at Queen Alia airport; however, Embassy suggests visitors obtain their visas in Washington prior to departure as there can be long lines for visa issuance at the airport. Money can be exchanged at the airport.

5. Embassy has reserved accommodations at the Four Seasons Hotel, a 10-minute ride to the Embassy. Phone: 962-6-550-5555; Fax: 962-6-550-5556. The hotel is within the per diem allowance. The hotel accepts Visa, Master Card and Amex. An Embassy driver and expeditor will meet Mr. Grappo and Ms. Franceski on June 11, and Ms. Schedlbauer on June 14, upon their arrival at the airport and accompany them to the hotel. Post understands Ms. Davies will arrive POV from Damascus.

6. Embassy Amman direct charges each office, agency and visiting delegation for all costs incurred in support of official travel. These costs include American and foreign service national employees' overtime, holiday pay and premium pay as applicable, field travel by Embassy personnel, transportation costs, vehicle rental, telephone installation and service, cell phone rental and service for visiting party and embassy employees, long distance telephone calls, equipment rental, printing expenses, photocopying, maintenance service contracts on rental equipment, control room expenses, hospitality room expenses, and any other costs that can be directly attributed to the visit.

Travelers are requested to provide fiscal data for all relevant costs.

7. Threat assessment:

Although the anger associated with the war in Iraq has subsided to some degree at present, the lingering emotional impact could well continue to fuel the threat to Americans in Jordan. Post is currently investigating a shooting incident near an Amman hotel that has the appearance of a random act of violence against an American. Recent incidents remind us

of the ability of transnational terrorist groups, as well as less sophisticated local elements, to target Americans and Western interests in Jordan. In March 2003, individuals acting under instructions from the former Iraqi government attempted to detonate an incendiary device in an Amman hotel. A group in southern Jordan was arrested in December 2002 for planning a possible attack against the embassy. The October 28, 2002 assassination of a U.S. diplomat in Amman outside his residence was ultimately linked to Al-Qaida. The perpetrators of the assassination were arrested by Jordanian authorities in December 2002. Recent worldwide terrorist alerts have stated that extremist groups continue to plan terrorist attacks against U.S. interests. In October 2002, Americans in Jordan were informed of a potential kidnapping plot by Al-Qaida. In December 1999, a group affiliated with the Al-Qaida organization was arrested in Jordan. This group was in the late planning stages of carrying out attacks against Western hotels and tourist sites.

The State Department has urged Americans in Jordan to consider their personal security and well being, including consideration of departure from the country. Americans who visit Jordan despite this warning should exercise maximum caution and take prudent measures to maintain their security.

18. Travel guidelines:

American citizens and official visitors traveling in Jordan should exercise caution, be alert and stay informed of regional and local events that could quickly impact the security environment in the country. Travelers should avoid large crowds and demonstrations and take measures to avoid areas where they are most likely to occur (city centers, universities, refugee camps), particularly during periods of increased tension. It is also recommended to maintain a low profile and not establish predictable patterns of movement, even if only visiting for a short period. Taxis are the only form of public transportation that is recommended.

Crime is generally not a serious problem for travelers in Jordan, although petty crime is somewhat common in the downtown Amman Hashimiyah Square area and near the Roman theater. In the narrow streets of the old city and at some of the more popular tourist sites, crowded conditions invite pickpockets and other petty criminals. Travelers are recommended to be more guarded in these areas and not present easy opportunities to criminals.

As Jordan is an Islamic country, cultural sensitivities should be observed. Female travelers should dress conservatively and not travel alone, particularly in areas not as accustomed to western visitors. Incidents of sexual harassment, assault and unwelcome advances of a sexual nature against western visitors and residents, although not frequent, have been reported. These incidents, while troubling, have not been pervasive.

19. Other:

For further information, see the State Department's Consular Information Sheet for Jordan at <http://travel.state.gov/Jordan.html> and the Public Announcement on travel in the Middle East and South Asia at <http://travel.state.gov/mideast/annouce.html>.
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